

American Opinion Summary

Department of State

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1. THE CONGO

Commentators fear that "another potential crisis" is building up in the Congo--largely as a result of Katanga President Tshombé's refusal to resume unification negotiations with Premier Adoula--that threatens "undermining the authority of the UN" and an East-West confrontation in Africa (e.g., N.Y. Times; Denver Post, St. Louis Post-Dispatch).

Regretting that the UN, "in playing at referee in the wild Adoula-Tshombé game," has "almost broken its back," the Baltimore Sun proposes "a change of venue." Perhaps if the President and Premier "were invited to some neutral place, away from trickery and palace guards, and with an acceptable mediator to set the ground rules, they might find it possible to come to terms," the Sun suggests.

Most commenting urge that "right now" is the proper time for the UN to come to grips with the situation, "through firm and fair action" (e.g., N.Y. Herald Tribune). "Tshombé's reluctance to move" in the direction of federal-type unity "may force the UN to apply economic sanctions to bring the situation to a head," the New York Times concludes. To the Denver Post, it is "obvious" that if unification is to occur "there will have to be considerably more pressure applied to Tshombé."

The Philadelphia Inquirer calls on the Western countries "interested in Katanga mining" to "relieve the UN of its intolerable Congo burden" by supporting "a reasonable compromise." "Undoubtedly," says the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, "economic sanctions could bring Tshombé to reason. But they would have to be fully supported" by these governments, and "this may call for pressure from Washington."

2. RUSSIA AND CUBA

Concern about the extent to which the Soviet threat in Cuba is being eliminated continues to be reflected in press comment.

A strong feeling persists that on-site inspection is essential. Without on-site inspection, the Providence Journal asserts, "there is no way of insuring that some missiles have not been hidden in mountain caves." Hearst's New York Journal-American says that U.S. Navy inspection of Soviet ships at sea is a

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RUSSIA AND CUBA
(Contd.)

remarkable development, but "it is no substitute for on-site inspection...in Cuba."

The Soviet bombers must be removed, a number insist. "The missiles are going. The bombers must go too," the Philadelphia Inquirer asserts. The Providence Journal holds that for "reasons of security and Cold War strategy, Washington must continue to press for compliance" on both the removal of bombers and on-site inspection.

The U.S. is not bound to ease its pressure on Cuba until the Russians have complied fully with their agreement, some suggest. As the New York Times expresses it: "Until the bombers are removed and on-site inspection arranged, no lifting of the blockade, no easement of political and economic pressure on Cuba can be contemplated."

Roscoe Drummond concludes that Americans "will not be satisfied until they know" that every Soviet missile and bomber has been removed, "and until then the President's conditional assurance that there will be no U.S. invasion cannot be operative."

Russian work on Cuban harbors is an added source of uneasiness. The Baltimore Sun, noting the possibility of the "build up of Communist naval capabilities in Cuba," declares: "They must be told loudly and clearly, that American interest in offensive armaments in Cuba...extends to bases for any kind of weapons that threaten the security of the hemisphere" (similarly, N. Y. Herald Tribune).

Doubt about the continuing firmness of Administration policy is reflected in comment from several sources. The Washington Star expresses hope that President Kennedy "having marched so far up the hill, is not going to turn around and march down again" on the question of on-site inspection. The Chicago Tribune asserts that the "resolution shown at first by the White House had run down like a clock." Scripps-Howard's Washington News declares: "It is time that some definite reassurance was forthcoming that firm American policy still stands."

Sen. Lausche (D-Ohio) has proposed that Administration officials be summoned by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to report fully on military equipment in Cuba. After referring to "his request, the Washington News comments: "If the public is not to be adequately informed, then at least this committee should be."

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